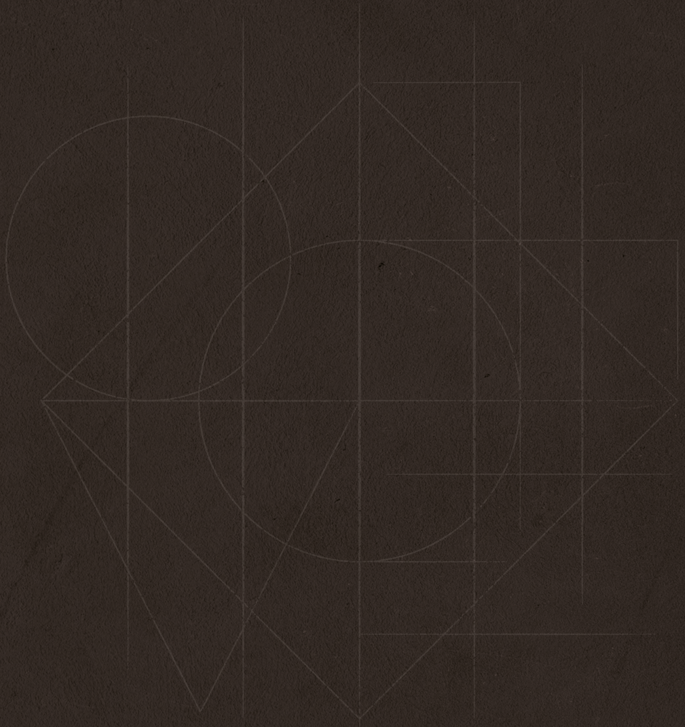
NOTES FROM

THE GRIMOIRE



THE THAUMATURGE

NOTES FROM THE GRIMOIRE

Warsaw, 1905

INTRODUCTION

When entering the dark world of The Thaumaturge, one must be prepared to experience the game's universe on two separate layers. One of them is the historical (or semi-historical, to be more precise) setting of Warsaw 1905 A.D. with all of its radiance and squalor. It is a world where the luxurious balls and soirées of the high society contrast with the poverty and crime that encompasses poorer districts of the city.

The second of the mentioned layers is a more spiritual one that can only be experienced by a select few. One of them is the game's protagonist, Wiktor Szulski, whose thaumaturgical skills enable him to see beyond the thick veil of the physical world. There lurk the salutors, otherworldly beings that prey on the weak-minded, pushing them towards unimaginable deeds. Only gifted thaumaturges can find these unique creatures and bend them to their will...

Since The Thaumaturge is set in Central Eastern Europe, it's no surprise that our designers drew inspiration from Slavic mythology while creating the looks of the salutors. Yet, if you look closely you will find elements from other cultural and spiritual beliefs and mythologies. Warsaw at the beginning of the 20th century was a multicultural metropolis where West and East met, sometimes mixing and sometimes clashing with each other.

This diversity is reflected on the pages of the bestiary you now hold in your hands, so sit tight and enjoy the journey into the dark world of The Thaumaturge!

WARSAW 1905 A.D.

COUNTRY: Kingdom of Poland (part of the Russian Empire)

FOUNDED: 13th century, city rights gained in 1323

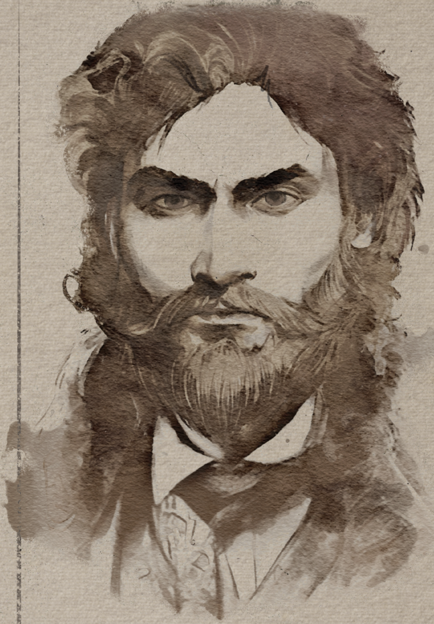
GOVERNMENT: Governor-general Georgi Skalon

POPULATION: Around 750,000 citizens

As the third largest city in the Russian Empire, Warsaw of 1905, or 'the Siren's City' as its inhabitants call it, is a multicultural and multiethnic metropolis. People from all parts of the world - Catholics, Jews, and Orthodox - live and work for the glory of the Tzar.

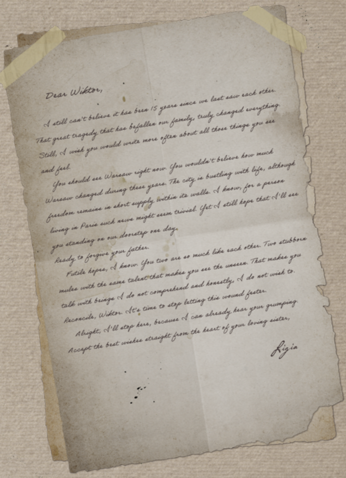
Yet beneath this benevolent structure, a dangerous rust of decline shows as the city is slowly taken over by revolutionary fervor. The working class strives for decent pay, women demand equal rights, and the independence movements aim to free Poland from the Russian yoke.

As the number of police and soldiers on the Warsaw streets increases drastically, a more otherworldly danger remains unchecked. Only the local thaumaturges can protect citizens from the salutors that come here from all over the world.



WIKTOR SZULSKI

A man haunted by his past returns to Warsaw after many years of absence. Wiktor is a member of a highly respected family in which thaumaturgy runs in their blood. After a shameful, yet accidental crime he committed in his youth, Wiktor had to leave Warsaw for Paris.



Dear Wiktor,

I still can't believe it has been 15 years since we last saw each other. That great tragedy that has befallen our family, truly changed everything. Still, I wish you would write more often about all those things you see and feel.

You should see Warsaw right now. You wouldn't believe how much Warsaw changed during these years. The city is bustling with life, although freedom remains in short supply within its walls. I know, for a person living in Paris such news might seem trivial. Yet I still hope that I'll see you standing on our doorstep one day.

Ready to forgive your father.

Futile hopes, I know. You two are so much like each other. Two stubborn mules with the same talent that makes you see the unseen. That makes you talk with beings I do not comprehend and honestly, I do not wish to.

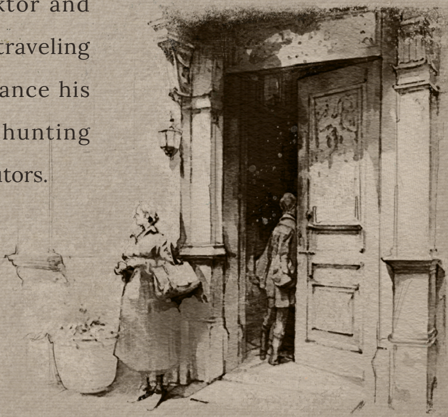
Reconcile, Wiktor. It's time to stop letting this wound fester.

Alright, I'll stop here, because I can already hear your grumping.

Accept the best wishes straight from the heart of your loving sister,

Ligia

These events fueled the conflict with his father, and their relations, never good to begin with, further deteriorated. For many years letters and telegrams from his twin sister, Ligia, remained the sole connection between Wiktor and his home city. Spending years traveling abroad, Szulski sought to enhance his thaumaturgist skills further, hunting for powerful beings known as salutors.



Wiktor's and Ligia's house

UPYR

He is a trusted companion – always by Wiktor's side, even when others abandon him. Upyr knows our hero all too well, as they had their first spiritual contact when Szulski was not even 10 years old. This frightening salutor has been with Wiktor ever since, although their bond has weakened over time.

The Upyr salutor comes from Slavic folklore and resembles a member of Polish nobility of the 16th century. He brings to mind a knight who gave his life for the king or his trusted companions, but whose soul was forsaken on the battlefield. This also feeds a romantic or tragic image of who Upyr is and what kind of temperament Wiktor has: Compassionate, but proud. Gentle, but also brave.

ORIGIN: Polish and Hungarian myths

DIMENSION: Heart

PROWESS: Dealing damage, disrupting opponents

WHERE TO FIND: He is closer than you think

Upyr's sabre

BUKAVAC

This salutor is the personification of brutality and a punishment for an unforgiven deed. The myth of Bukavac originates from Syrmia, a region that lies between the Danube and Sava rivers.

Bukavac derives his name from a word meaning „to howl", as he is believed to have a fearsome howl or shriek that can be heard from a great distance. He serves as a reminder of an inevitable punishment that will always come, with all its claws and sharp teeth, after you've committed a deed that resulted in someone's harm. To find him, you must look among those who may be harboring a dark secret of their own.

ORIGIN: Balkan legends

DIMENSION: Deed

PROWESS: Dealing damage, applying suffering

WHERE TO FIND: Last seen in Caucasus

WELES

A subtle hiss and a glimpse of a shiny, golden scale somewhere at the periphery of vision – these are clear signs that Weles lingers nearby. Derived from Slavic mythology, Weles is seen as either a demon or a god.

He is commonly associated with secrets, temptations, wealth, and the kingdom of death. It's in Weles' nature to be drawn towards money, secrets, and intrigues. And where would you find those things in 1905 Warsaw if not amongst the high society? In combat, Weles is a ruthless salutor who drives enemies mad for riches and makes them gamble with their lives.

ORIGIN: Slavic mythology

DIMENSION: Word

PROWESS: Dealing damage, healing, disrupting opponents

WHERE TO FIND: Drawn to luxury and prestige

LELEK

From time to time, we all have an itch that we cannot scratch or a song that's stuck in our heads yet we can't recall its lyrics. These are likely Lelek's doing. This salutor shares its name with a small bird, simultaneously feared and admired in Kashubian folklore.

Lelek is a playful spirit but also a very dangerous one. At first sight, it looks innocent – with quirky moves and big eyes – but remain vigilant! Lelek's song has the potential to drive people insane, pushing them to reckless behaviors such as balancing on the line between life and death.

ORIGIN: Kashubian legends

DIMENSION: Mind

PROWESS: Lowering focus, disrupting actions, dispelling negative effects, protecting from negative effects

WHERE TO FIND: Enjoys places where tension runs high

GOLEM

This mythical creature is well known in Eastern European legends, and all those harming Jewish communities there should fear its wrath. The word "golem" occurs in the Bible and means „my light form" or a „raw" material. Golem is usually built from clay or mud and possesses huge strength to use against its enemies.

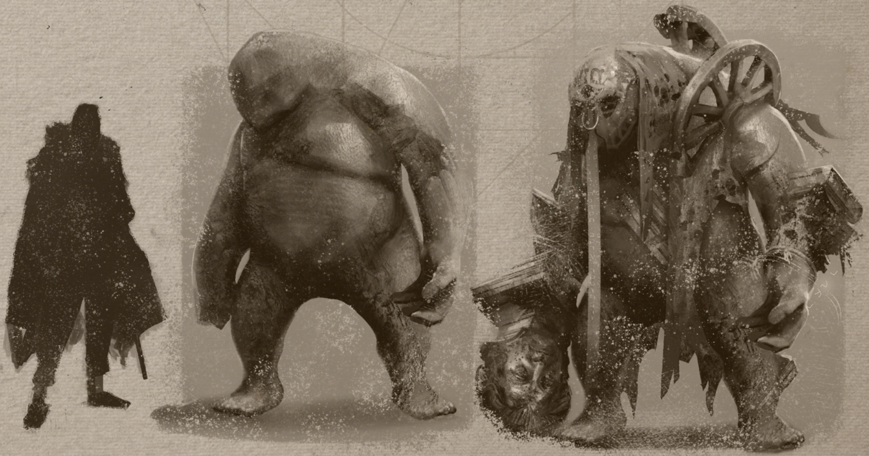
Like an impending doom, once this salutor sets its eyes on a target, no strength on earth can stop it. If you are reckless enough to search for Golem in Warsaw, you should visit Port Praga on the Vistula River, as it's heavily inhabited by the city's Jewish minority.

ORIGIN: Jewish legends

DIMENSION: Deed

PROWESS: Dealing damage, slowing down targets, using enemies' weaknesses to player's own advantage

WHERE TO FIND: Near the local Jewish community



MORANA

In ancient Slavic beliefs, the cycle of death and rebirth plays a prominent role. It's no surprise that the death of the Goddess Morana (or "Marzanna" in Poland) at the end of winter becomes a celebration of the rebirth of Spring.

Morana is a powerful salutor, but she's not easy to meet. Experienced thaumaturges can find her lurking just beneath the water's surface, waiting to lure a surprised victim into her cold and deadly embrace. News of drownings in a specific place along a river bank can be a clear indication that Morana hides nearby.

ORIGIN: Slavic folklore

DIMENSION: Mind

PROWESS: Lowering focus, dealing damage, slowing down targets, disrupting actions

WHERE TO FIND: Usually follows people who are lost and lack meaning in life, drawn to the resignation

DJINN

From ancient Persia came the legends of spirits created from pure fire. Djinns are supposed to be invisible, although they can take many forms. As such they symbolize forces of nature that are relentless yet not quite comprehensible.

How a Djinn salutor managed to appear in Warsaw is a mystery, althoug the Russian Empire borders the Ottoman Empire and Persia from the south, so it's not quite impossible. Djinns are known to be malicious and deceitful but serve as powerful allies if tamed. The smell of smoke can tell a thaumaturge that a Djinn is nearby.

ORIGIN: Mesopotamian mythology

DIMENSION: Heart

PROWESS: Healing, dealing damage, applying negative effects

WHERE TO FIND: Drawn to those who strive for better at all costs

KRAMPUS

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Industrial Revolution rapidly took over cities of the Russian Empire, and Warsaw was no exception. As factories grow, it's common to see an industrious German minority arrive with its culture and tradition.

Krampus is a salutor that derives from such a tradition, as legends of a horn-headed demon come from majestic Alpine valleys. As is the case of every salutor, those with a clear conscience (let's be honest - a small fraction of humanity) should not fear Krampus' visit. In many cases, this malicious being may give you a gift that corresponds with the evil deeds you've committed.

ORIGIN: German folklore

DIMENSION: Word

PROWESS: Lowering enemies focus, restoring player's focus by lowering HP points, dealing damage per the amount of Focus points enemies are missing

WHERE TO FIND: Can be found near any kind of mischief

backpack

Michal Marciniszyn

Marlena Kiepel

Bigias

Wysocki Andrzej

Aga Sadowy

Andriy Mazuryk

Antoni Kosmala

Grzes

Tarnava

Brein

Hanna Parchańska

Magda Białek

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Anna Mąka

Adrian Rozlach

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Wiktor Frączek

Slith

Wojciech Denk

Tomasz Giertler

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Krzysiek Justyński

[illegible]

Franek

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A. [illegible]

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Diogi

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THE THAUMATURGE

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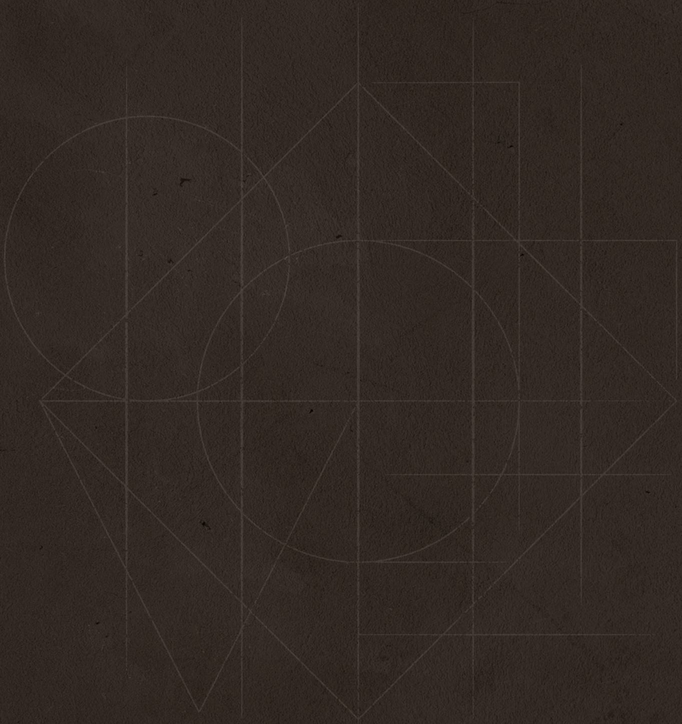

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